1913

To the CHAIRMAN and MEMBERS of the SALCOMBE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Gentlemen,

In accordance with the Order of the Local Government Board, I beg to submit my Annual Report on the Health and General Sanitary circumstances of the District for the year 1913.

I am glad to be able to show again that the general health of the district continues satisfactory, as borne out by the death-rate, zymotic death-rate, and infantile mortality rate.

This year for the first time the death-rate is determined by the factor provided for the district by the Registrar General, and is therefore the lowest since 1906.

The number of Births is lower than that of any year since 1900.

By means of an Order issued by the Local Government Board all cases of Tuberculosis are now under compulsorily notifiable.

The principal reforms required in the district were noted in my last Annual Report and remain, viz :—

(1) A Scheme for the re-drainage of the Town.

(2) An improved method of House Refuse Disposal.

(3) The provision of an Isolation Hospital in conjunction with other authorities. It is satisfactory to be able to record that the foremost requirement is still engaging your serious consideration.

The general characteristics of the district and of its inhabitants were outlined in my first Annual Report, and as no material change has taken place in either, it it unnecessary for me to repeat my remarks.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Rateable Value.

The gross rateable value of the district amounts to £11,970 5s. od., and the nett to £7,825 5s. od., a penny rate producing therefore £32 12s. 1d.

Area, Inhabited Houses, and Population.

The district has a total area of 1,184·020 acres, and at the 1911 census contained 518 inhabited houses and a population of 2,032.

Poor Law Relief.

The amount expended in Poor Law Relief, during the past year, was £102 14s. od.

With regard to the extent to which hospitals and other forms of medical relief are utilised, applications are occasionally made for admission to the Kingsbridge and District Cottage Hospital, and patients are received into the Kingsbridge Workhouse Infirmary and the South Devon and East Cornwall Hospital.

There is, in addition, a voluntary local fund for the provision of nurses in cases of serious illness, which proves most useful, but I am still more in favour of a permanent district Nurse, who would be invaluable in the instruction of personal and domestic hygiene.

House Accomodation.

There is still a decided want for a modern class of house for working men with moderate means, which may be rendered more acute by such necessary steps as the Council may have to take, when a full report of the inspection of the district under the Housing and Town Planning Act has been laid before you. All new houses in the district are built under the supervision of your Surveyor and in accordance with the modern Bye Laws approved by the Local Government Board.

The Census (1911) population divided among the inhabited houses gives an average of 3.9 persons per house.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births.

During the year 25 Births were registered, giving a birth rate of 12.3 per 1,000 of the population. Of these 16 were males and 9 females.

The birth rate for 1912 was 19.1 and the average for the previous ten years 18.1

The number of illegitimate births was two these are included in the above total.

The rate for England and Wales for 1913 was 23.9

Deaths.

Twenty nine deaths occurred in the district during the year, viz. 10 males and 19 females. The death rate was therefore 14.2, for 1912 it was 14.7 and the corrected average for the past 10 years 13.1.

The deaths of three residents were registered outside the district, but as one death registered in the district was that of a non resident the crude death rate was therefore 15.2, and the standardized 12.1 of the total deaths registered in the district one occurred under 1 year of age, 1 between 1 and 5, 1 between 5 and 15, 1 between 15 and 25, 3 between 25 and 45, 5 between 45 and 65, and 17 of 65 and upwards.

Two deaths were registered from Cancer, giving a death rate of 0.98; and one from Phthisis, giving a death rate of 0.49 per 1,000 population. One death was due to accident.

The rate for England and Wales for 1913 was 13.4 (Standardized).

Zymotic Death Rate.

One death only occurred during the year from any of the seven zymotic diseases, viz. from enteric fever, the zymotic death rate therefore being 0.49 per 1,000 population.

Infantile Mortality Rate.

This is the expression used to indicate the number of deaths under one year of age per 1,000 births per annum, and for the past year is represented by the figures 40.0. As however one death belonging to the district was registered outside, the corrected rate is therefore 80.0.

The rate for England and Wales for 1913 was 109.

Infectious Diseases.

Our methods of dealing with infectious diseases consist of compulsory notification, investigation of the disease incidence, and subsequent prophylactic measures, including isolation as far as possible of the infectious sick and disinfection on termination of the illness.

Eleven cases of infectious disease were notified during the year, viz :—

Scarlet Fever, 2 ; Erysipelas, 2 ; Enteric Fever, 1 ; Diphtheria, 1 ; Phthisis, 5. The cases of scarlet fever were imported cases occurring at the same time. The cases of Erysipelas were of exceedingly mild form of the facial variety, and investigation failed to reveal any insanitation to account for the illness. The case of diphtheria and the case of enteric fever were both sporadic, the cause in each instance being obscure. The latter was a severe case and ended fatally.

By a regulation of the Local Government Board which came into force on the 1st February, 1913, all cases of tuberculosis are compulsorily notifiable. For the year 1913 the incidence of Pulmonary Tuberculosis has been 2.4 per 1.000 population. A tuberculosis Officer has been appointed by the County Council to investigate cases suitable for sanatorium treatment, and one of the cases referred to above is now undergoing such treatment. Of the remainder, one has left the district, the others being advanced cases, are unsuitable for Sanatorium Treatment.

On receipt of notification each case is personally visited and printed instructions left. At present the premises are disinfected after death or removal, and in my opinion they ought in addition to be disinfected periodically, and suitable spitting flasks supplied for the patients' use.

Free bacteriological examination, introduced by the County Medical Officer, has again been of great assistance, not only in verifying the diagnosis but also in detecting "carriers" and excluding contacts in cases of diphtheria.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

Water Supply.

The Council's Water Supply has been constant and sufficient, and duplicate engines and pumps of greater power have been installed. The mains and dead ends are periodically

flushed, and the storage Reservoirs cleaned out and limewashed.

Closet Accomodation.

In the populous and closely built centres the water carriage system is in force.

Scavenging.

The House Refuse is collected and removed daily by your own scavenger, and once weekly in the outlying districts. Each house should be provided with a sanitary dust bin for storage prior to removal.

Sewage Disposal.

The bulk of the sewage discharges into the Estuary but that from most of the houses in the North Sands Valley is treated biologically by means of septic tanks.

Sanitary Inspections of the District.

Systematic inspections of the district have been made from time to time by your Sanitary Inspector and myself, and the few nuisances discovered have all been of a minor nature and not requiring a special report.

Schools.

It has not been necessary to resort to school closure during the year. They have been periodically inspected and the sanitary arrangements found satisfactory.

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING ACT, 1909.

Inspection of District.

Number of dwelling houses inspected	81
Number of dwelling houses considered unfit for human habitation ...	3
Closing orders, representations made	3
Number of closing orders made	0

(In abeyance pending presentation of Committee's report to the Council.)

Number of dwelling houses, the defects in which will be remedied without the making of closing orders 78

General character of defects found to exist :—

Insanitary refuse bins, defective traps, deficient ventilation, unpaved yards, leaky roofs, defective soil and ventilation pipes, insanitary W.C. pans, damp walls, defective window sashes, and leaky drains.

Dairies and Cowsheds.

The Dairies are, as I have always been able to report, particularly clean and well looked after. The cowsheds are limewashed twice a year as the regulations direct, and are kept in as satisfactory a condition as their structural defects admit.

Slaughter Houses.

The condition of the two slaughter houses I have always found satisfactory.

Factory and Workshops Act 1901, Schedule 132.

As empowered by this section of the Act I have from time to time with your Inspector visited the eight registered Bakehouses in your district and found them clean, properly ventilated and drained, with a sufficiency of air space and proper sanitary conveniences. The same remarks apply to all other workshops and workplaces in the district which come within the Act. There are no homeworkers, underground bakehouses, or offensive trades in the district.

Your Inspector reports during the year he has made periodical inspection of your district, which resulted in three informal and one statutory notice being served. In each instance the nuisance was abated or abolished.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

VINCENT W. TWINING,

Medical Officer of Health.

Salcombe,
11th February, 1914.

E. P. Marshman, Printer, Fore Street, Salcombe.